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1936 Vine Seed

Observations



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The J. C. Robinson Seed Company

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Main Office: Waterloo, Nebr.

BRANCHES:

ROCKY FORD, COLORADO

MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

A Report of the New and Improved Vine Seed Varieties for 1936.

TWO MONTHS among the seed fields at harvest time prompts us to write a report of our observations of progress in the development of new and improved varieties in vine seed. Much information, too, has been secured from our trial plantings in California and elsewhere. For the most part, we are well pleased with quality in the stocks which we are producing.

Cucumbers

The Colorado is rapidly gaining in popularity because of its excellent shape and color as a market variety. This kind is difficult to produce as a seed crop and demand far exceeds the supply this season. Straight Eight is in considerable demand and, in our opinion, is a very good sort. It has uniform shape, good size and good color in the early stages of growth. Vaughan or Longfellow is a truly remarkable variety. Long and slender at the market stage, with a beautiful dark green color. Chicago Pickle and National Pickle continue as leaders for pickle use. These two kinds along with Snow's Pickle have given universal satisfaction for many years.

Pickling blends are meeting with some favor among the leading houses. It may be that they have merit and will continue in use. The common practice is to make a mechanical mixture of about 80% of the most desirable variety with 10% each of two similar kinds. This combination gives some variation in type of pickles and covers the need of various sizes required for packing. Seed from this product should not be reproduced for planting purposes as the individual types will eventually be lost through cross pollination. It is believed by some that hybridization ex-

isting between unrelated varieties in such a blend increases the yield of fruits. Full information and our recommendations of varietal combinations upon request.

There is a growing belief that seed treatment is highly desirable in sections where Cucumber are produced for pickling. Results have not been very dependable because of uncertain growing conditions and plant diseases. We have installed new equipment and are prepared to treat seeds at a reasonable cost.

Muskmelons

In muskmelons we have observed an almost constant change in types of the present strains along with many new introductions. This applies especially to the H. B. types. The demand seems to be for larger melons. Among those of particular interest are the Morrill Strain or Jumbo Hearts of Gold, a new Jumbo type of Improved Perfecto and the No. 936 Hale's Best. This last is a selection of increased size of the uniform No. 36 strain. We do not perceive that yields are noticeably sacrificed by the increase in size of fruits.

Also original Old Type Hale's Best is popular chiefly because of its size and earliness. No. 112 and Improved H. B. are used to some extent but all other strains are just about out of production with the exception of that fine, new stock Mildew Resistant No. 45, which is now in general demand. This has been developed for the important shipping sections of the west where the powdery mildew disease is serious. The introducers of this melon at the University of California have pronounced it perfect and we understand will discontinue further efforts along this line on this variety. No. 45 is comparatively early, of medium size, oval in shape, with a faint stripe, good net and thick flesh. Supplies are largely consumed for this season on account of the active demand. We are reserving some seed for general distribution.

Another variety of merit is the new Pride of Wisconsin. Something on the order of Honey Rock, but lacking the pronounced netting. An advantage is that the flesh is more firm, so it will likely carry for greater distances. The flesh is thick, of fine texture, and it has a remarkably small, triangular seed cavity.

Of all the white-colored melons introduced in recent years, none have survived longer than one or two seasons. Imperial is one of the few exceptions, but the old reliable Green Flesh Honey Dew outsells them all on the market. Shippers have done well with this variety this season. Gold Rind Honey Dew is identical except it has an attractive golden color on the outside at maturity and does not sunburn.

There are a number of less interesting kinds, more or less designed for local areas, which have been recently introduced.

Watermelons

Last spring we gave considerable publicity to our new wilt resistant watermelons. The need for such stocks is rapidly approaching in many sections where watermelons are an important crop. In our tests this season on soil severely infested with fusarium wilt these kinds have prospered where ordinary sorts could not survive.

We do not hesitate to recommend Improved Kleckley Sweet No. 6 as one of the best strains of this variety. It has rich, red flesh, and good length. Improved Stone Mountain No. 5 does not attain the enormous size sometimes found in the regular Stone Mountain, but is of uniform size and highly resistant to wilt. All seed is certified.

A year ago we announced a new early variety which matured in much less time than most kinds. We now believe it to be a valuable sort for the northern latitudes, especially. The fruit is almost white with fine, green veining,

nearly round in shape, with rather thin rind, bright red flesh and small, dark brown seed. We will introduce it under the name of Early Canada. It has matured this summer in 75 days from planting in the vicinity of Winnipeg.

Northern Sweet or Winter Sweet is also in production and is an excellent kind for earliness. The Early Kansas or Wichita Red Seeded, also known as Red Russian, is a fine variety. It is comparatively early, of large size and good quality.

We want to again call your attention to the California Klondike. No melon has finer flavor and the flesh is almost blood red to the rind. Sugar content of the Klondike is higher than in any other watermelon with which we are familiar. Striped Klondike is now most popular because it does not show sunburn as much in hot weather.

However, all strains are about equal in edible qualities and though the fruit has a thin rind it can be shipped long distances with careful handling. A wilt resistant strain of the California Klondike has been developed and will likely be released during the coming season.

Our trial grounds included a wide assortment of watermelon varieties of both domestic and foreign introduction, but so far as we could determine no others were of outstanding merit.

Squash

Buttercup Squash seems to be in demand and crops, unfortunately, are short. It undoubtedly will meet with increasing favor, as both quality and size are exceptionally good. The Green Tinted Benning's White Bush continues to gain popularity, as does Black Zucchini, and the long, slender Cocozelle Bush.

There are no new introductions of unusual importance in squash. Vegetable Spaghetti is more popular and sup-

plies are ample this season. It is a novelty of some value. We have revived the old Marblehead variety. It is one of the few kinds showing a high resistance to the curly-top disease and is recommended for those sections where this trouble exists. Blue Banana and Pink Banana deserve more prominence as they have fine flavor. Also Mammoth Whale, a similar sort, is again in production.

Do not overlook the Delicata or Sweet Potato variety. No squash has better flavor in our opinion. We are really producing excellent stocks in squash and supplies of most kinds are available for early shipment.

Novelties

We continue to produce most of the novelties in vine seed as a certain demand exists for limited quantities from time to time. This year we have again grown most of them.

The Serpent or Snake Cucumber is a genuine novelty, and considered edible when young and tender. It is used for pickling, but in reality belongs to the muskmelon family.

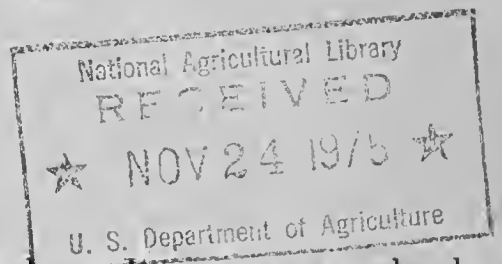
Glass Melon or Vine Peach is proving to be quite popular for pickling purposes when young and green.

The true Henderson's Bush Muskmelon is again available. A spicy, little green-flesh sort, valuable in gardens where space is limited. The vines seldom grow over 18 inches in length.

The highly-scented Ornamental Pomegranate or Queen Anne's Pocket Melon, is likewise available. This might easily be considered one of the oldest melons known to mankind. It is valuable to store among Cantaloupes, imparting its pleasant fragrance to the melons themselves.

We are offering an unusual collection of rare and ornamental gourds, comprising some fifty or more varieties in a new mixture that includes the highly colored Turban types and many other genuine novelties. We also expect to produce the true edible gourd during the coming season.

Bush Pumpkin is new to many. A small-fruited kind, somewhat similar to Small Sugar or Pie Pumpkin, but



smaller and a shade lighter in color. It grows on a bush plant, whereas all other well-known kinds are produced on running vines.

Improved Varieties

May we again call your attention to our conscientious efforts toward improved stocks in vine seeds. Our program of pure-line breeding continues on a wide scale and we feel gratified with results so far. As these purified strains are released we will bring them to your attention from time to time.

From 1937 production we plan to distribute a number of these fine new stocks, notably, Early Yellow Summer Crookneck Squash which has been in-bred sufficiently that it represents an exceptionally pure stock of uniform fruits. Golden Custard Squash invariably shows some mixture. Our new stock, which will be released in 1937 is 100% pure. A number of standard varieties in watermelon are likewise ready for distribution. We also expect to introduce Golden Acorn Squash, a true Table Queen type, but orange in color at all stages of growth. It has been developed through six years of pure-line breeding by our Mr. H. E. Allderdice at Modesto, Cal.

This year we have maintained over 3,000 square feet of space under muslin covers on cucumbers alone for breeding purposes. The same work is being carefully conducted on all leading varieties in Muskmelons, etc.

Samples, photos and all information pertaining to vine seeds will be furnished at any time upon request.

Golden Anniversary

Next year (1937) marks our fiftieth year as growers for the wholesale trade, exclusively. At that time we hope to send to each of our customers a copy of "**The Cucurbits, Illustrated.**"

THE J. C. ROBINSON SEED COMPANY,

Main Office: Waterloo, Nebraska

Branch Offices: Rocky Ford, Colorado, and Modesto, California.